

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): (a) Arrangements have been made.

(b) An Assistant Engineer, Mr. C. Balakrishna Rao was put in charge of the current duties of the Chief Engineer's office, an arrangement such as is covered by Articles 70, 76 and 77 of the Travancore Service Regulations. With regard to the second part of the question, the member is referred to the latest *Civil List* which contains the information sought for.

(c) Yes.

(d) There has been no settled practice or hard and fast rule on the subject.

(e) This does not arise in view of the answer to part (d).

MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil*): With regard to the answer to part (b), may I know whether there was any precedent when an Assistant Engineer was asked to look after the duties of the Chief Engineer when the latter post became vacant?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): There was a precedent when the Chief Engineer was absent the Executive Engineer who was not senior was appointed. That was some years ago and there was also a precedent on a previous occasion when an Assistant Engineer was put in charge.

MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil*): That is a recent case, is it not?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): Yes.

MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil*): But I want to know if there has been any other instance?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): No.

MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil*): May I know for how many months or days Mr. Balakrishna Rao was in charge of the duties of the Chief Engineer?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): About a month.

Placing of Mr. Balakrishna Rao in charge of the Chief Engineer's duties.

283. **MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI** (*Chirayinkil*): Will the Government be pleased to state:

(a) the designation of the officer now in charge of the Public Works Department;

(b) whether he was not specially deputed on other duty outside the department when the vacancy arose;

(c) whether there was not an Assistant Engineer of the same grade and rank working as Personal Assistant to the Chief Engineer in the Chief Engineer's office when the Chief Engineer's place fell vacant;

(d) whether there was any special reason to bring in Mr. Balakrishna Rao and send away Mr. Harihara Aiyar; and

(e) whether Assistant Engineer, Mr. Harihara Aiyar, was at any time put in charge of the Chief Engineer's duties?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): (a) An Assistant Engineer was in charge of the current duties of the Chief Engineer's office, an arrangement of the nature covered by Articles 70, 76 and 77 of the Travancore Service Regulations.

(b) Yes.

(c) All Assistant Engineers are of the same grade. There was an Assistant Engineer in the office at the time.

(d) Yes, the exigencies of public service.

(e) Yes.

MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil*): What were the particular exigencies of public service at this particular instance when Mr. Balakrishna Rao was called upon from an outside department, to be in charge of the duties of the Chief Engineer?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): His larger experience in the department.

MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil*): Am I to understand that Mr. V. Harihar Aiyar who once acted before in the place of the Chief Engineer has not the necessary experience?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): It was only for a short period that he was in the Chief Engineer's office.

MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil*): May I know how long Mr. Harihar Aiyar was working as a Personal Assistant to the Chief Engineer?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): I think it was only for a short period.

MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil*): May I know whether there is any other reason why Mr. Balakrishna Rao was preferred to Mr. Harihar Aiyar in this instance, considering the fact that Mr. Harihar Aiyar was once placed in charge of the duties of the Chief Engineer?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): Mr. Balakrishna Rao was the permanent Personal Assistant to the Chief Engineer and so the Government thought he would do better.

MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil*): May I know whether there was any Executive Engineer in Trivandrum when this vacancy arose?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): There are two Executive Engineers in Trivandrum town.

MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil*): May I know the reason why one of them was not asked to do the duties of the Chief Engineer?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): They have not got the experience of office work in the Chief Engineer's office.

MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil*): Am I to understand that an Assistant Engineer was appointed to act as Chief Engineer in preference to an Executive Engineer?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): Nobody was appointed to act as Chief Engineer.

MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil*): All right; to look after the duties of the Chief Engineer.

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): This Assistant Engineer was put in charge of the office of the Chief Engineer on account of his long experience of the work in that office and on account of the fact that the period was only short.

MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil*): May I know whether Mr. Balakrishna Rao was paid any additional remuneration for the work that he did during this period?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): That question is still under the consideration of Government. Nothing has been paid.

Position of Mr. Balakrishna Rao.

284. **MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI** (*Chirayinkil*): Will the Government be pleased to state:

(a) whether Mr. Balakrishna Rao has to give advice to, and control the work of, the several Executive Engineers who are superiors to him in rank and pay;

(b) whether Mr. Balakrishna Rao has, under the present arrangement, to countersign the travelling allowance bills of the Executive Engineers;

(c) whether the Government are aware that an Assistant Engineer cannot sanction any estimate for work for however small an amount or sanction contracts; and

(d) whether they are aware that the Executive Engineers can sanction estimates for works up to Rs. 500 and accept contracts up to Rs. 5,000?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): (a) and (b) The answers are in the negative.

(c) Yes.

(d) Yes.

MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil*): May I know whether during this period Mr. Balakrishna Rao had any occasion to countersign the T. A. bill of any Executive Engineer?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): No. He was asked to send up the bills to the Government.

MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil*): May I know then who countersigned the T. A. bills during this period?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): The bills were countersigned by the Chief Secretary to Government.

MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil*): Is there any provision to enable the Chief Secretary to countersign T. A. bills?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): Yes, there is a provision in the Account Code which authorises the Chief Secretary to Government to countersign bills.